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Central Intelligence Agency
Office of the Deputy Director for Intelligence

29 October 1984

NOTE TO: Executive Director

FROM : Associate Deputy Director for Intelligence

This report is the result of the small interagency working group formed to assess the practicality of an electronic dissemination system for the NID. We are inclined to go ahead and support a more detailed assessment of such a system using an external contract as well as CIA internal support.

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Richard J. Kerr

Attachment:
As Stated

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P216

DDI- 06189-84

26 October 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR: Richard J. Kerr
Associate Deputy Director for Intelligence

FROM: [redacted] Deputy Director 25X1
Current Production and Analytic Support

SUBJECT: Electronic Dissemination of the NID

1. The study, or more precisely the quick look, accomplished its primary objective but little more. The findings below were the result of one working group meeting with representatives from OC, OS, ODP, DO/IMS, CPAS and ASG, formal inputs on cost from OC and ODP and a follow-on meeting between CPAS, OD&E and ORD. The findings are in general agreement (cost being the biggest uncertainty) with ideas presented to you by [redacted] 25X1 in his memo of September 16, 1984. The DO reserved 25X1 judgment on the acceptability of such a system for handling sensitive NID material until a definitive network description was available. The major findings are:

-- The technology exists today to electronically disseminate and display the NID with no loss of readibility or appearance.

-- Consumer acceptance is an unknown factor, but the ease of operation of the receiving terminal would not be the limiting factor. Questions of availability, accessability, and personal preferences will be more of a determining factor.

-- There does not appear to be any barrier to making the electronic NID as secure or more secure than today's NID. The cost in dollars and convenience involves a number of tradeoffs and cannot be determined without a detailed study.

-- OD&E expertise in moving large amounts of data rapidly appears well-suited to handling this problem. A computer mainframe-based solution does not appear to be the way to go.

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-- The overall cost of a 200 station network will probably be in the $25-30 million range ($15-20 million for a 50 station network). These estimates are subject to considerable uncertainty.

-- Encryption is a significant part of the cost. However, there is fiber optics technology near at hand that may eliminate the need for local point-to-point encryption.

-- The availability of [redacted] to support this system is an unknown at this time and some feel it is unlikely to be available. 25X1

-- Technology for authentication of users is a rapidly developing field, but reliable, user friendly systems are likely to be available in time to support this system.

-- A detailed study of the electronic NID concept would cost about $250,000 and would be necessary in order to get definitive answers about cost, security, manpower resources and consumer acceptability.

2. In my view the project is doable, there are no identifiable major obstacles, and the apparent cost, while high by DI standards, is moderate when compared to the total cost (direct and hidden) of producing the NID today. The potential benefits of having such a system go well beyond the immediate equities associated with the NID.

3. I recommend that the DI proceed to develop a detailed proposal for electronically disseminating the NID, including the necessary external contract and inter-directorate support.

[redacted] 25X1